

MINUTES OF THE  
EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 18, 2021  
(Approved October 20, 2021)

The Planning Commission held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2021. Present for the meeting were Walter Woessner, Kathryn Alexis, and Larry Tietjen. Lance Parson and Paul Lacon were absent. Also present were Mark Hosterman, Township Solicitor, Rick Tralies, Township Planner, Brady Flaharty, Township Engineer and David Kraynik, Township Manager.

Mr. Woessner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the pledge was recited.

### **AGENDA**

Mr. Woessner proposed to move the Review of Sketch Plan from Forge Custom Homes for 527 Bethel Church Road to be first on the agenda. The Planning Commission members were all in favor.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Woessner stated they do not have a quorum to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting tonight and will hold this until the September meeting.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were no Citizen Comments.

### **ADDITIONAL ITEMS BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

#### Review of Sketch Plan from Forge Custom Homes for 527 Bethel Church Road

Greg Wagman and John Lentz from Forge Custom Homes stated they wanted initial feedback on the two versions of the sketch plan for 527 Bethel Church Road which is a 17-acre parcel of land. They are looking to custom build approximately five, eight or nine homes. The sketch plan they provided has one version showing 6 lots (lower density) with driveways going out to Bethel Church Road and the other version shows 8 or 9 lots (higher density) with an internal cul-de-sac road. Mr. Woessner stated his opinion is the higher density version so there are no driveways coming onto a collector road which is what Bethel Church Road is and he feels this is the safest. Mr. Woessner also stated what they say is not binding. Mr. Hosterman asked why can't the cul-de-sac line up with Wiand Road across the street and it was stated that due to site distance issues it may not be possible. Greg Wagman and John Lentz also asked the Planning Commission about whether or not a park should be included on the plans or a fee in lieu and Mr. Woessner stated he does not see having a tiny park that isn't used. Mr. Tralies stated the Planning Commission is currently working on finishing up ordinance amendments and depending on their time frame it may affect their plans regarding open space. He will share this information at a later time with them.

### **SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

#### Consideration of Review of Artisan Construction Group Major Preliminary Subdivision/Land Development Plan for Coventry Chase Townhomes (Painter Tract B) 245 Ellis Woods Road

John Iannozzi, attorney for Artisan Construction Group, stated they are proposing 112 townhomes on a 42-acre tract of land at 245 Ellis Woods Road which is a use permitted by right under the Township's code. The majority of the comments in the review letters they will comply with but are asking for 10 waivers. Patrick Stuart, Stuart & Associates, gave an overall presentation on the plan for the 112 townhomes which includes better distributed parking throughout the community, a dog park, sitting areas, pavilion with fire pit, open space, trails, emergency access road, and stormwater management. In regards to the Open Space requirement Mr. Stuart stated they are required to have 8 acres but their plan shows 12 acres. Each townhouse has a two-car garage and there is overflow parking throughout. A resident asked about the stormwater basin and how is this going to be made safe for children. Mr. Stuart stated the larger basin would be fenced. The question was raised as to

who maintains this development and it was stated the Homeowner's Association (HOA). There was overall concern from the residents present at the meeting regarding stormwater management, traffic as well as some other issues.

Several residents expressed concerns regarding stormwater management and the current issues they have with stormwater runoff as well as how the stormwater management the developer proposes will affect the surrounding properties. Victor Kelly, Project Civil Engineer with Commonwealth Engineers, explained the proposed stormwater management. A resident stated that Coventry Glen is a developed community and they have surface drainage issues and had to do mitigation which still hasn't helped their situation and feels this new development could have the same type of issue. A discussion ensued regarding stormwater management issues and what Artisan proposes to do about it. A question was asked if the stormwater plan doesn't go correctly will the developer stand behind it and fix the problems. Mr. Flaharty stated the applicant has to prepare a stormwater design that meets the Township's stormwater management ordinance requirements, as well as County requirements and Federal NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) requirements. Mr. Flaharty stated East Coventry Township as well as basically any other municipality in the County are under the same stormwater management model ordinance that came down from the Feds, to DEP to this level. Mr. Flaharty stated that after the plans are approved by the Township and the necessary permits are acquired, the developer is obligated by the Best Management Practices (BMP) Agreement to maintain those facilities in perpetuity.

A resident asked if the ordinance amendments the Planning Commission is working on would affect this development and Mr. Tralies stated the growing greener ordinance amendments, which have not been adopted yet, will not affect this development because the submission was made prior to the adoption of the ordinance. Mr. Tralies does feel, however, that they could be close on the amount of open space that would be required in the proposed ordinance amendment.

There will be public sewer located in this development and residents had questions about the public sewer and whether or not there is enough capacity in the system for these additional 112 townhomes. Mr. Flaharty stated there is in the range of approximately 900 EDU's available which will more than cover the 112 townhomes. A discussion ensued. This project has no impact on the sewer study being done in the Parker Ford area. Mr. Flaharty also explained that in regards to public water, that is regulated through Pennsylvania American Water not the Township.

A resident asked if the property was already purchased and does the public have a voice in what they are proposing. Mr. Iannozzi stated yes, they are fee-simple record owner of the property and what they are proposing is in the codes as a use permitted by right but that input from the public matters. He also feels this development will improve surrounding property values. A question was raised about a traffic study which was done and reviewed by McMahon & Associates, the Township's Traffic Engineer. The roads in the development are to be private and maintained by the HOA. Although the roads are to be private, they will be built to Township specifications. It was asked by a resident how to get a copy of the traffic study and it was stated a right-to-know request needs to be submitted to the Township. An emergency access road will also be provided. There was a lot of concern from the residents present for the meeting with the traffic in the proposed area of the development and it was stated that both the developer's traffic engineer and the Township's traffic engineer are taking all concerns into consideration. The proposed electric will be underground. There will be no parallel parking on the roads in the development. There will however, be parking areas throughout the development and each driveway will be 40 feet long and able to park approximately three vehicles. There will be approximately 395 parking spaces that would be available throughout this community.

Regarding the trails, it was questioned about a trail to the Elementary School and Mr. Tralies stated they would like to see trails provided to give children a safe way to get to school instead of busses coming into the development. Mr. Tralies stated they have not had a specific conversation with the school district yet but want to make it clear that from the Township's perspective they want all the children that live in these new units to be able to walk to school. A question was asked about who would they need to contact regarding the traffic on E. Cedarville Road, and because it's a state road that would be PennDOT. Several lengthy discussions ensued.

Mr. Hosterman stated the Planning Commission and consultants are here to enforce the zoning, subdivision/land development, and stormwater ordinances and the comprehensive plan. The Township cannot impose conditions that they don't have an ordinance provision for. This preliminary plan will stay in the process of the Planning Commission for a little while before it goes to the Board of Supervisors. If and when the preliminary plan is approved by the Board of Supervisors then the developer comes back to the Planning Commission and they repeat the process again with the final plan. Assuming they get final plan approval from the Board of Supervisors, they have to meet whatever conditions are remaining, then record the plans with the County and then they can begin construction.

It was stated they would like to go over the waivers they are requesting but the Planning Commission will not be making any recommendations on the waivers tonight. Mr. Woessner would like Artisan Construction Group to follow the procedure as stated in the Ordinance and submit a waiver letter which they stated would be submitted next time. Joan Hodges with Artisan Construction Group went over a few of the review comments such as:

- The HOA will have their own trash hauler.
- The dog park will be small and don't feel landscaping inside is necessary.
- The paved trail would be private – Mr. Tralies stated the Township would prefer the trails to be public.

Ms. Hodges stated they needed clarification from McMahon & Associates on one of their review comments. Mr. Iannozzi stated they will be making some changes and will make their resubmission to the Planning Commission for the next meeting in September.

## **ADDITIONAL ITEMS BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

### Update on Growing Greener Revised Draft Ordinances

Mr. Tralies stated that both Mr. Hosterman and Mr. Flaharty have the draft ordinances to review. Mr. Flaharty does not have any comments from a stormwater management standpoint. Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Flaharty to review it again in a general capacity. Mr. Hosterman stated he still needs to review it and will then get together with Mr. Tralies to discuss.

### Northern Federation Update

Nothing to report at this time.

### Historical Commission Update

Nothing to report at this time.

### Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Alexis moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. Mr. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 3-0-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kutsch  
Secretary